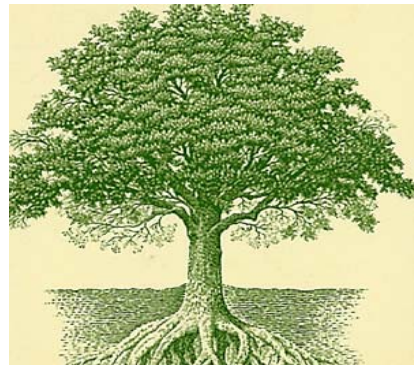


Through the Years
Unity Church's
175th Anniversary
Celebration
1834-2009
Sunday, August 30, 2009
Jesus is the same,
yesterday, today, and forever



Sharing Christ...Growing Believers

WORSHIP
CELEBRATION SUNDAY
August 30, 2009

Matthew 25: 1-30

WELCOME

Rev. Frank DeLuce

SPECIAL MUSIC: Unity Worship Team

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

CONGREGATIONAL GREETING

UNITY CHOIR

“How Great Thou Art”

HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS

Rev. Robert Humes

Terry Stoops greetings (Deb Holodnik)

***HYMN NO. 374**

“Now Thank We All Our God”

BRINGING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

UNITY CHOIR

“Here I Am Lord”

MESSAGE

Matthew 25:21 “Well done good and faithful servant...”

“How To Hear Those Words”

Rev. Frank DeLuce

SPECIAL MUSIC: Unity Worship Team

***BENEDICTION**

***Recognition of 175th. Anniversary Celebration team
and comments from Deb Holodnik, chair.***

The History- 1834-2009

The members of every congregation ought to be familiar with its history. . . . [because] we stand between past generations and the generations to come. . . . This is the duty of each successive generation in the world, receiving, as a trust, from past generations, the result of their thoughts, their experiences, their wisdom, their inventions, their arts, their sciences and the record of their doings, to hand these down unimpaired to future ages, combined with all that they themselves may invent or discover, which would be of advantage to the generations following, thus showing to the generations to come “the praise of the Lord’ and reciting that which we have heard and known and our fathers told us.

The next section encompasses a bulleted timeline of events that show the early struggles and endeavors of the members and pastors of the church throughout the years. It is a story of persistence, faith and triumph giving glory to God and His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

(Much of the historical information contained in this booklet has been gleaned from the record left for us by those who organized the 150 year anniversary celebration in 1984. Our thanks to those who have come before us and left us this legacy.)

- **1833-** Unity Associate Reformed Church is established April 2, 1833, but not as a formal organization. The original petitioners for the association were: David Coon, John McGill, Jonas Long, Hugh McClurken, James Sharp, James McGregor, William Aber, Uzziah Stewart, John Hewitt and Saywers Brison McClurkan.
- The original meeting house is the great outdoors in McClurkans' grove of maple trees, in what is now Schemp's Auto. A large attendance of two hundred is recorded with preaching supplied through the Presbytery for four years.
- Services are held in people's homes, barns and a favorite spot near the junction of Leechburg Road and Unity Center Road.
- **1834-** The first house of worship is built and paid for in the fall of 1836. The dimensions are: 40 x 50 feet and considered spacious enough for 400 people.
- **1835-** Rev. J.R. Kerr is appointed to moderate a call for the combined churches of Puckety, Unity and Tarentum. There is no record of this being fulfilled.
- **1837-** Mr. Wm. Connor is ordained and installed as pastor of Unity Congregation, which is flourishing. Rev. Connor is popular with the people, active and energetic and serves the congregation for 12 years. Membership increases.

- **1846-1851-** Unity joins with its former pastorate Bethel Church to seek a minister to supply the pulpit. Membership declines.
- **1851-** Rev. James Kelso accepts the call to preach at both Unity and Bethel. He is ordained and installed pastor of both congregations, May 25, 1852.
- **1856-** Several Universal men and women start a Mission Bible School.
- **1858-** Unity becomes Unity United Presbyterian Church; Membership increases.
- **1864-** Unity acquires Rev. Kelso as a full time pastor.
- **1871-1872-** Some unrest and dissention among members causes membership to decline.
- **1873-** On January 1, Rev. Kelso leaves Unity. In July, Rev. E. Z. Thomas accepts the call to Unity and is installed Dec. 16, 1873. In the short time without a pastor, membership declines to 90 members. Under the new pastor, 280 members during in his 22 years of service.
- **1879-** A new red brick building is built, just on the heels of the Great Panic of the 70s, for a cost of \$4,500- a great sum in its day.
- **Jan. 18, 1891-** Rev. E. Z. Thomas leaves Unity in favor of a Leechburg congregation.
- **1891-1893-** Unity is served by traveling preachers who stop in on Saturday evenings,

“fill the pulpit Sunday morning, consume a generous portion of stewed chicken and mashed potatoes, snore in an orthodox fashion Sabbath [Sunday] night, and head off for the first train Monday morning with \$12 in his purse and his pocket-worn manuscript decorated with another entry added to its already long register of ‘when and where preached!’” During this time, Unity and Logan Ferry are constituted as one pastoral charge.

- **Feb. 19, 1893-** Wm. K. Fulton, a third year seminary student preaches for both congregations and accepts a joint call. During his 10 years as pastor, Fulton helps keep a saloon from opening in a building built for it, the church’s first parsonage is erected, and 191 members are added to the membership roll.
- **Feb. 13, 1903-** Rev. Will Hughes is ordained and installed at Unity. He serves 4 years, then, imbued with a missionary spirit and receiving a call from the Fourth United Presbyterian Church of Cleveland Ohio, then a mission congregation, Hughes severs connections with Unity and leaves, August 1907. During his pastorate 87 names are added to the roll.
- **1907-** Rev. W. J. Hogue begins work at Unity after a two-month period without a minister. During his time at Unity several improvements are made. With the winter of 1908-1909 being a particularly cold one, it happened that Rev. Hogue preached an extremely long sermon on

one particular morning when the furnace failed to work. While the minister was able, in his own words, “to keep warm by strenuous physical exercise” as he talked, the parishioners could not. That same morning the congregation plans a renovated auditorium, a new Sabbath School Room and a new furnace. During Hogue’s service beautiful stained glass windows are added to the building and 127 names added to the roll. There are also 13 adult baptisms and 48 infant baptisms. The congregation celebrates 75 years during his regime and Hogue is quoted as saying, “May the congregation celebrate with thanksgiving and praise one hundred years of God’s guidance, and may it endure for centuries more a blessing to that community.” Rev. Hogue left Unity after a farewell sermon on Feb. 18, 1912.

- **May 20, 1912** -Rev. Jas. H. Grier, then without a pastoral charge and having returned from a rest in the West, preaches at Unity and is informally called. He is later installed at Unity as pastor. At the beginning of his service to Unity, there are 200 members, a large morning service and a small Christian Union Society. Grier adds an evening service and a prayer meeting in Jan. 1913. Members laud the services and feel it sparks a period of evangelism. The Mission Sabbath School at Clarksville (now the Universal Road section above Unity) is helped to purchase land, build a building and start what is now called the Universal United Presbyterian Church. All

but \$500 of the \$3,285 still remaining on the Unity church building is paid off through money raised by church members and money left to the congregation from deceased members. During Grier's 2 years of service as pastor 313 people join Unity, 27 by certificate and 280 by profession of faith. At the close of his time at Unity there are 554 in good standing. He also continues the crusade against the "proposed saloon on the corner above the church."

- **July 1914- March 1919-** Rev. J. Frank Campbell succeeds Rev. Grier and has the task of retaining and assimilating the large membership brought about by Grier's Evangelistic Services. During WWI, 50 young men from the church join the services, with two of them dying in service to the country. The Flu Epidemic occurs and takes 2 score of the membership. When the Universal Mission is certified, about 75 members leave Unity for that church. Mission Funds are doubled and 190 members join the church.
- **June 10, 1919-** Rev. Wishart is ordained and installed. This is a period of the "New World Movement." Unity opposes the denomination five-year pledge plan and sticks to a one-year plan. Unity supports missionaries to foreign fields, a Rev. John Baird of Benha, Egypt and Rev. Ernest Clements in the mission field of Badomali, India.
- **1923-** Rev. Wishart takes a leave of absence to

study in Edinburgh, Scotland. Rev. Grier supplies the pulpit in his absence. Electricity comes to Unity at this time. In Nov. the following year Rev. Wishart leaves for another call.

- **May 1, 1925- Oct. 25, 1931-**Rev. Robert Yourd is installed as the new pastor. During his first year of ministry, in line with the concept that all members are ministers, there is a revival under the leadership of Mr. Fred MacMullen, through which 100 members join; a building fund is established and a successful Vacation Bible Schools begins. The Bible schools are considered very beneficial to the young people of the community. The choir sings Cantatas and 256 members join the church.
- **Feb. 8, 1931-1946-** Rev. John L. McGeogh is installed and serves as pastor of Unity. A new brick parsonage replaces the old frame one, despite the Great Depression due to hard work of the membership to raise funds. One memorable project –the Cherry-Tree Project – raises \$3,000 to pay off the church debt. A small leafless tree is brought into the sanctuary decorated with small plaster red cherries. Each cherry is sold for \$1.00 to raise the needed money.
- **June 1934-** Unity celebrates its 100th anniversary by pageant, song and testimony.
- **Dec. 8, 1946- 1962-** Rev. Dr. J. Y. Jackson is

installed at Unity. The choir is re-organized and continues to sing anthems and Cantatas. The first Youth Club “anywhere” is established.

- **Sept. 11, 1955**, ground breaking occurs for the new church at the top of the hill from the old church.
- **Jan. 13, 1957**- the new church opens. A kindergarten class starts and a Boy Scout Troop uses the facility.
- **1962-1987**- Rev. Robert S. Humes and his family join Unity. He continues Youth Club, Vacation Bible School and the kindergarten. He adds a secretary's church office and assistant to the staff. Other organizations such as the Golden Agers, AARP, Alcoholics Anonymous have access to the Fellowship Hall for meeting places. It was during this period that Terry Stoops was ordained and installed as Assistant Pastor. A steeple is added and in 1982, the stained glass memorial windows from the old red brick church are renovated and hung in the sanctuary; 1,119 people are added to the roll in 25 years. A new roof is added in 1983.
- **1987-1988**- Rev. Carolyn Jones serves as interim pastor as the congregation seeks a pastor.
- **July, 1988- present**- Rev. Frank DeLuce is ordained and installed on July 3 with a standing room crowd in attendance. It is one

of the hottest days of that summer. A number of new ministries and building renovations are initiated. The existing sanctuary is totally renovated including the permanent installation of the stained glass windows, along with the purchase of a new Allen Digital Organ.

A “Contemporary” worship service, designed to attract a non-churched persons, is introduced, with Pastor Frank and his wife Barbara and the aid of a pianist comprising the “worship team”. From its modest beginnings it grows to having a full worship team with singers and instrumentalists. Three worship services are conducted weekly: one “contemporary” on Saturday evening, and both “contemporary” and “traditional” on Sunday morning. Over the years the ministry team increases to include the following full time directors: students, children, small groups, worship team, along with a part-time choir director, assistant children’s director, office support staff, and three janitorial staff.

- **1998**— Plans were made to build a new worship center. Two consecutive financial campaigns, “Growing in Unity” and “A Time to Build” were initiated to raise the necessary funds. Currently the total amount of contributions are \$2,580,823 and the church has no mortgage.
- **2000**– Several new ministries begin: Small Groups Ministry for members to hold meetings, prayers, Bible study in their homes;

children's Sunday school becomes Promiseland for elementary school youth.

- **2001**— Vacation Bible School is transformed into “SummerBlast,” growing from a meager beginning to a current registration of nearly 600 children and 105 volunteers.
- Construction begins with Alexander Construction Inc. Building Committee members: Marilyn Amodeo, David Barcellino, Stanley Caldarelli, Jan DePalma, Paul Miklos, and Fred Parke, with Pastor DeLuce serving as Ex-officio.
- **2002**—New worship center is dedicated and services begin in August. The contemporary service is conducted at 11:00 a.m. and the traditional service at 9:30 a.m. in an effort to reach out to the un-churched in the community. This is enabled by the unselfish and willing sacrifice of those previously attending the traditional service at the traditional 11:a.m. hour.
- **2005**-CLC-Christian Leadership Concepts Men's groups initiated.
- **2009**– From the 1990's to the present time under Rev. DeLuce's tenure, Unity's long standing tradition of mission support to the local community, regional and global ministries continues and is ever expanding. Members participate in mission endeavors to Alaska, Florida, Louisiana pan-handle, Appalachia, Honduras, Africa, Ireland, and

India. Pastor Frank travels to various cities in India training local pastors there.

Unity's mission statement is to "Share Christ and Grow Believers" toward Christ-like maturity. Eight hundred new members have been added to the roles, most by confession of faith or reaffirmation of faith; 42 adults are baptized along with 236 children.

Not only do we look to our past and rejoice in God's favor upon us, but we press on toward the future God desires for us as we begin the fourth quarter of our second century of witness and service to Jesus Christ.

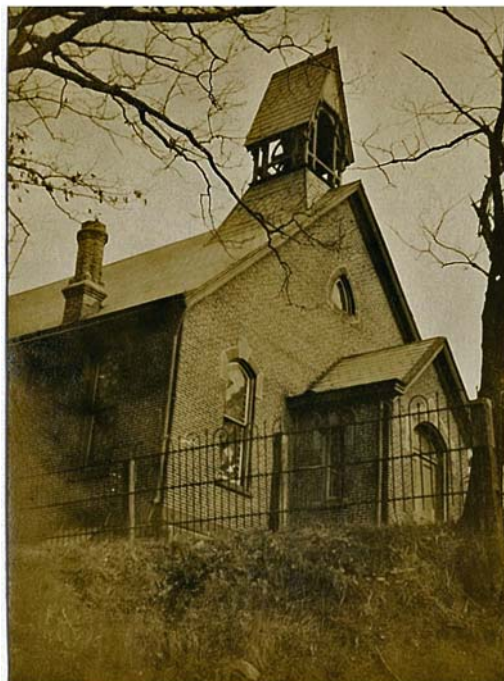
Did You Know:

- Unity was originally called Unity Station
- Many Sabbath School members signed a pledge to keep away from liquor
- Only Psalm singing was permitted until 1920 when hymns were inserted into the Psalter
- During Rev. Yourd's pastorate in 1931, the directory contained members names, address and the amount of "dues" each person paid
- It was considered wrong for a church member to join a secret society
- Rev. Wm. Hughes' only means of transportation was a bicycle
- The winter of 1908-1909 was so severe the people had to sit in church wrapped in blankets because of a defective furnace
- Two early ministers had two charges or churches- Rev. Kelso served Unity and Bethel Church, and Rev. Wm. K. Fulton spent 21 years in Unity and one-half of that time in Logan's Ferry
- Former minister James H. Grier volunteered as chaplain during WWI. Crossing the Atlantic, his ship was bombed and sank; he was one of the lucky ones saved to carry out his duties until the conflict ended
- The first Youth Club in the U.P. Presbytery began at Unity

- The first Sunrise service, under the auspices of the Allegheny County Sabbath School Association, was held in Unity
- A pageant, “Echoes of the Past” (The History, 150 years, Unity United Presbyterian Church, 1984) was written and produced in 1934 for the 100th anniversary with 100 people taking part in the various episodes and the church bell rung 100 times
- The Women’s Association was formerly the young Women’s Missionary Society, and before that the Mission Circle and before that the King’s Daughter
- That for a person to be sessioned, meant to be brought before the Board of sessions for offenses unbecoming a professing Christian
- Some examples of unbecoming offenses included: farming on the Sabbath, drunkenness, neglecting to take communion, fighting with neighbors, doing laundry on the Sabbath, refusing to pay debts, and buying a Sunday paper.
- Unity has sponsored missionaries to Ireland, China, as well as mission trips to Florida, Alaska, Louisiana pan-handle, Honduras, Malawi, Africa, as well as formed ongoing partnerships with churches in India.

UNITY CHURCH BUILDINGS THROUGH THE YEARS

FIRST BUILDING 1887-1957



SECOND BUILDING 1957



NEW WORSHIP CENTER 2002



**LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE
PHASE 1**



PHASE 2



PHASE 1 LOBBY ENTRANCE



This booklet closes with photos of church buildings. But a building is not the church. A building is designed only to “facilitate” ministry. The people make up the Body of Christ—the people are the Church. We here today celebrating this 175th anniversary stand on the shoulders of the faithful members and pastors who have come before us. May we be faithful to our mission to “Share Christ and Grow Believers” so that all who come behind US will find US faithful.

August 30, 2009 Program

Church Service 10:30 to Noon

**Picnic to follow in the Café and side
lawn on the lower level**

Noon to Three p.m.

with

Music

Balloons

**Old fashioned games on the side lawn and
baseball field— family sack races, deck the
deacon and more**

Old time photos in Promiseland

A WORD OF APPRECIATION

The 175th Anniversary Celebration committee would like to thank the members of Unity Church for the opportunity to serve them as they organized this celebration and the Board of Deacons for their participation in making this day a success.

The members of the committee include:

Deb Holodnik, Chairperson—Cindy Carsey, Deb Sommers, Eileen Micelli, Frank McGary, Janet Pierce, John DeLuce, Keiwa Tomlinson, Ted Beatty and Pastor Frank DeLuce.